

File 176

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

COUNTRY	USSR (Turkmen SSR)	REPORT	
SUBJECT	Ashkhabad Airfield	DATE DISTR.	15 June 1955 25X1
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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

STATE	#x	ARMY	#x	NAVY	#x	AIR	#x	FBI	AEC						
(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#")															

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REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR (Turkmen SSR)

DATE DISTR. 8 April 1955

SUBJECT Ashkhabad Airfield

NO. OF PAGES 9

DATE OF INFORM

REFERENCES:

PLACE ACQUIRED

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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General

1. In 1951 Ashkhabad Airfield was used jointly by the Soviet Air Force and the civilian airlines (Aeroflot). The director of the airfield was a civilian. However, during an Aviation Day celebration [redacted] this man wearing a dark blue uniform with the rank of general lieutenant. The director had no jurisdiction over the military personnel on the field.
2. The airfield had no anti-aircraft gun positions, air raid shelters, or camouflaged installations. The airfield surface was not flooded during rainy periods but little flying was accomplished during such periods. There was never any fog to disrupt flying operations. Although flying activity took place during the hours of darkness, [redacted] there were no runway lights, boundary lights, or obstruction lights.
3. Civilians employed at the field were not subject to military draft. [redacted]
4. On "Aviation Day" the airfield was open to the public. Only civilian aircraft could be entered by the visiting populace.

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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Parachute Training

5. [redacted] parachute jumping activity on the field northeast of the runway. At least once a month, always during good weather, a group of Soviet Air Force officers dressed in dark blue, one-piece, buttoned fatigues and canvas helmets assembled on the field. The fatigues were worn over regular uniforms. A U-2 type trainer aircraft piloted by a Soviet Air Force pilot took jumpers up one at a time. Upon reaching a certain altitude, the jumper bailed out and the aircraft immediately landed to pick up the next man. Jumpers opened chutes several seconds after leaving the plane; sometimes they waited longer while making "delayed" jumps. After landing, jumpers gathered their chutes and were taken off the field in an ambulance. Such exercises usually lasted all day. Jumpers' insignia were worn by both officers and enlisted men in town.
6. Civilians employed on the field were eligible for jumping. A volunteer jumper had to take a preparatory theoretical course before actual jumping. Eighty rubles were paid for the first jump, 120 rubles for the second one. There were no volunteers after a civilian who was employed in the cafeteria broke his hip in 1947 or 1948 while participating in parachute training.
7. All civilian pilots were required to make five jumps a year. During an Aviation Day celebration in 1950 or 1951, a mass jump took place. Fifty to sixty parachutists took part, jumping from four two-engine planes.
8. Following are legends to sketches on pages 7, 8, and 9. Numbers and letters in parentheses refer to numbers and letters indicated on the sketches.

a. Legend to Sketch No. 1 on page 7. [redacted]

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- (1) Ashkhabad Civilian Airfield (N 37-58, E 58-20). This airfield was called Grazhdanskiy Aerodrom (Civilian Airfield).
- (2) Road, running from the race track (5), northeast to the airfield (1). The road was six-meters wide and was constructed of asphalt.
- (3) Road, running from Ashkhabad north to the airfield; the road was six-meters wide, and was constructed of asphalt.
- (4) Single rail line, called the Ashkhabad Railroad. It was a broad-gauge line running from Bakharden (N 38-29, E 57-25) southeast to Ashkhabad.
- (5) Race track and sport stadium. The stadium had a grass surface and it was approximately 500-meters long and 300-meters wide.

b. Legend to [redacted] sketch of airfield. [redacted]

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[redacted] (See pages 8-9 ..)

- (1) Direction-finding station (pelengator), a two-story, stone building 8x5x5 meters, with flat roof. An eight-mast radio antenna was located next to northeast side of building. (See Sketch No 3 on page 9 for [redacted] sketch of antennas.)
- (2) Landing strip, approximately 2500 meters long and 100 - 150 meters wide. It was surfaced with gravel and clay. The landing area could be extended to the northwest and northeast. Transport and fighter-type aircraft were observed using landing strip.

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- (3) Guard post - The post was 7x3x2 meters and was built of wood. The post was manned 24 hours a day in two, 12-hour shifts by unarmed civilian guards. The post had telephone connection with direction-finding station (1). Guards were observed firing red and green flares during the approach and landings of aircraft.
- (4) Wooded area, approximately 2 x 2 kilometers. The area was used as picnic area.
- (5) Radio station. This station was also referred to as pelengator (direction-finding station) [redacted] It was located approximately 2 1/2 kilometers east of terminal building (24) [redacted] (6). The building was 10x10x6 meters. It was built of stone and was a single-story building with a low pitched, red-tile-covered-gable roof. A ten-mast radio antenna was located next to the southeast side of building (see Sketch No 3 on page 9. The station employed five or six male civilians who worked eight-hour shifts, 24 hours daily. One man was observed operating a radio key and wearing earphones. The building area was enclosed by a barbed-wire fence, but no guards were observed. [redacted] there were four rooms in the building, each with radio equipment. A small generator operated on east side of the building. [redacted]
- (6) [redacted]
- (7) Aircraft parking area, approximately 200x40 meters. The area was surfaced with clay and gravel. Fifteen to twenty PO-2 and U-2 type aircraft parked here. The area was illuminated at night.
- (8) Aircraft parking area, approximately 150x100 meters, constructed of asphalt. [redacted] five to eight aircraft, type IL-12 and LI-2, parked here daily [redacted]
- (9) Weather station. An underground weather station that employed female civilians who worked in 12-hour shifts. A white rotating beacon mounted approximately seven meters above the surface and an anemometer were located above the underground installation.
- (10) Wall, two meters high, constructed of clay and gravel. This wall extended [redacted] to the road (32).
- (11) L-shaped restaurant. One wing was approximately 70 meters long, the other 40 meters. Each wing was approximately 12-meters wide and 6 meters high. The restaurant was constructed of stone and had a tin, low-pitched, gable roof. It was used by airline passengers and military and civilian employees of airfield.
- (12) Administration building, a single-story, stone building 30x7x6 meters. It had a tin, low-pitched, gable roof and contained 15 to 18 rooms. Approximately 40 civilians worked in this building.

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- (13) Volley ball court, 20x9 meters, gravel surface
- (14) Building, 30x12x6 meters, single story, and built of stone; the building was partially destroyed during the earthquake of 1948. It was used as a hospital until 1951, when it was used for briefing and classroom work for military and civilian pilots.
- (15) Billets, consisting of six two-story buildings. Each building was 100x40x10 meters, built of brick, and had a low-pitch, tile, gable roof. Civilian pilots and their families lived in these buildings. Maple trees afforded a camouflaging effect in this area.
- (16) Billets, six structures, each 100x40 meters. The structures were referred to as "Zemlyanka" (dug-out) [redacted] The floor of each building was approximately one meter below the surface of the surrounding area. The upper portion of structures were earth covered and similar in shape to a quonset hut. The only portion of building not of earth were the windowed sections. The structures altogether were two-meters above the surface. These dugouts housed both enlisted and officer personnel. Maple trees also afforded a camouflaging effect in this area. 25X1
- (17) Hospital, under construction in July 1951. The hospital building was built of stone and was two stories high. This was to be a hospital for both the military and civilian employees on the field.
- (18) Barbed-wire fence, approximately two meters high. The fence enclosed the airfield on the southeast and south sides.
- (19) Vehicle parking and garage area. This area belonged to the Food Department of the City of Ashkhabad. A number of stone garages were located in area. Vehicles were observed parked in open. The area was partially enclosed by barbed wire.
- (20) Road leading from Ashkhabad to the airfield. It was six-meters wide and was surfaced with asphalt. Wooden telephone poles ran along the south side of road from the city to airfield. An electric power line ran along the north side of road from the city to the airfield. The poles were supported by two railroad tracks which were placed in the ground vertically. [redacted] three thick cables supported by these poles. 25X1
- (21) Swimming pool, 50x25x3 meters.
- (22) Road - same as (2) in Sketch No 1 on page 7 .
- (23) Club house 30x20x6 meters. It was an open-shed-type structure with a tar-paper, flat roof.
- (24) Terminal building, 60x14x12 meters. It was a two-story building, built of stone with a flat roof. A six-mast antenna was located next to southeast side of terminal (see Sketch No 3 on page 9 for sketch of antenna).
- (25) Building, 30x10x6 meters. A single-story, stone building with a low-pitched, tile, gable roof. It was used for storing parachutes and bedding.
- (26) Garage, 60x10x6 meters, a single-story, stone building with a low-pitched, tile, gable roof. It housed approximately 20 vehicles including fuel and water trucks, a fire truck, busses, tugs (sic), and auxiliary-power units.

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- (27) Billets referred to as guard and fire station [redacted] The billets were 10x5x6 meters, single-story, stone, and had low-pitched, tile, gable roofs. They housed airfield guards and firemen, all of whom were civilian. 25X1
- (28) POL storage area, 300x150 meters, enclosed by a two-meter-high barbed-wire fence. The one entrance was guarded by civilian guards armed with rifles during the day. [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] Approximately 50 fuel tanks resembling rail-car tanks, painted white, were in the enclosure. Approximately 20 of these were of 50-ton capacity (written on side) and were mounted horizontally on wooden stands. The remaining tanks had capacities of 25, 10, and 5 tons. These were in a vertical position and were mounted on wooden stands. Several smaller tanks had the word "oil" printed on the side. 25X1
[redacted] ZIS-5 trucks of five-ton capacity loaded fuel in approximately five minutes and then delivered the fuel to aircraft. Two entrances to an underground installation were observed.
- (29) Reservoir, five-meters square, six-meters deep. The reservoir contained water for fire emergency.
- (30) Barbed-wire fence, two-meters high. The distance from the hangar (33), to the fence was 75 to 80 meters. 25X1
- (31) Road, dirt surface. [redacted]
- (32) Gravel road. The road was five-meters wide, and led from the road (22) to the hangar area.
- (33) Hangar, 100x25x8 meters. It was a stone building with a low-pitched, tile, gable roof. Maintenance of all aircraft was performed here. [redacted] 250 civilian workers from Ashkhabad were working in this building. [redacted] 25X1
- (34) Two hangar aprons, each was approximately 60x60 meters and asphalt surfaced. [redacted] up to 20 aircraft, types IL-12 and LI-2, parked on these aprons. 25X1
- (35) Aircraft parking area. The area was gravel surfaced, and was approximately 500 meters long and 10 to 15 meters wide. Fifty to sixty LA-9s and LA-11s were parked here.

c. Following is a legend to Sketch No 2 on page 10. The sketch consists of the floor plan of the airfield terminal building.

First Floor

- (1) Lobby
- (2) Ticket counter
- (3) Radio rooms
- (4) Hotel office
- (5) Room
- (6) Hotel rooms
- (7) Empty room with stairs to the second floor
- (8) Baggage room
- (9) Hallway
- (10) Main entrance
- (11) Entrance to airfield
- (12) Antennas

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Second Floor

- (13) Stairs
- (14) Lobby
- (15) Hotel rooms
- (16) Airfield Director's office
- (17) Telephone operator
- (18) Rooms

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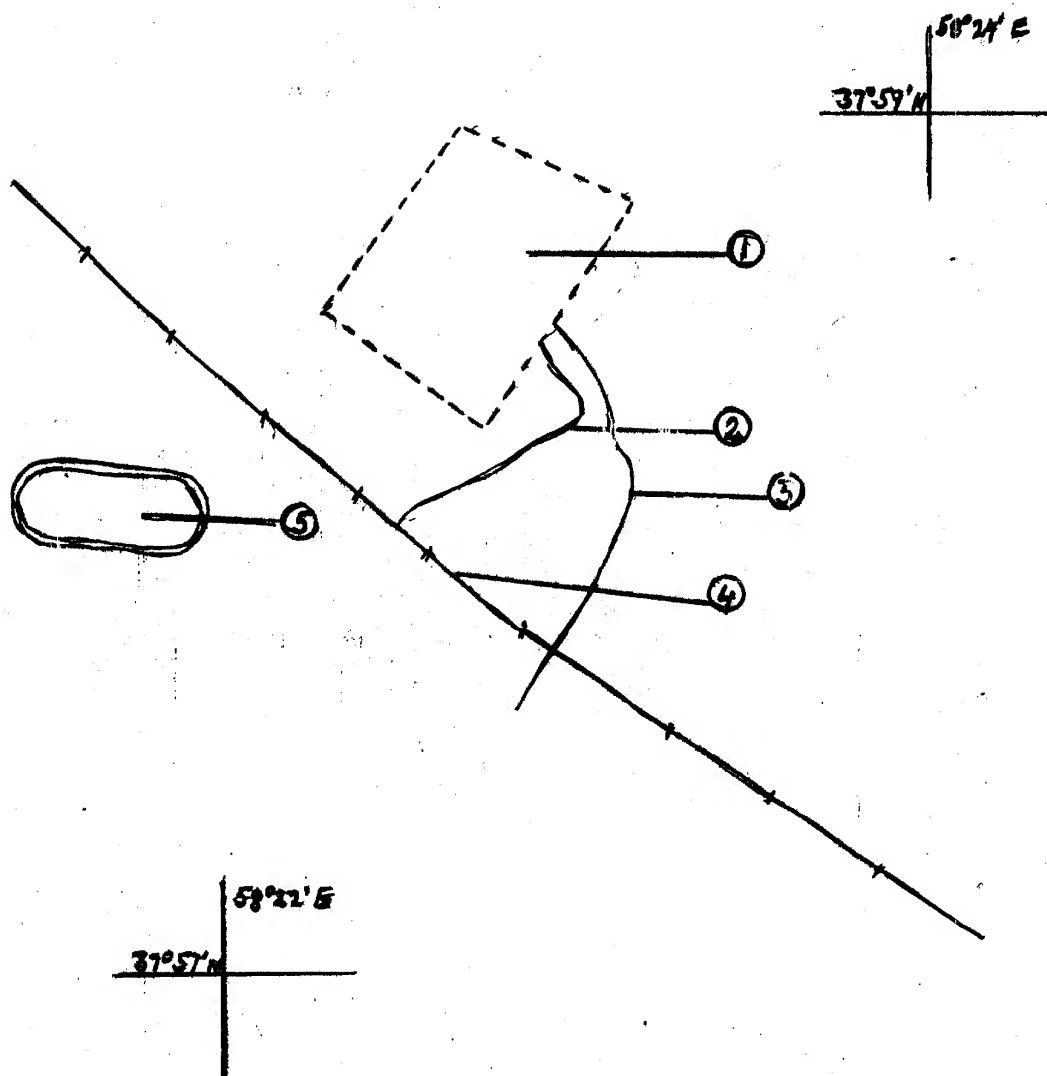
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Sketch No. 1
Pinpoint location of
Ashkhabad Airfield

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-- BARBED WIRE

===== DIRT ROADS

FIELDS

250 M

500 M

750M

1000 M

APPROXIMATE SCALE

GROUND
FORCE
FIRING
RANGE
and
TANK
TRAINING
AREA

NO FENCE

Sketch of

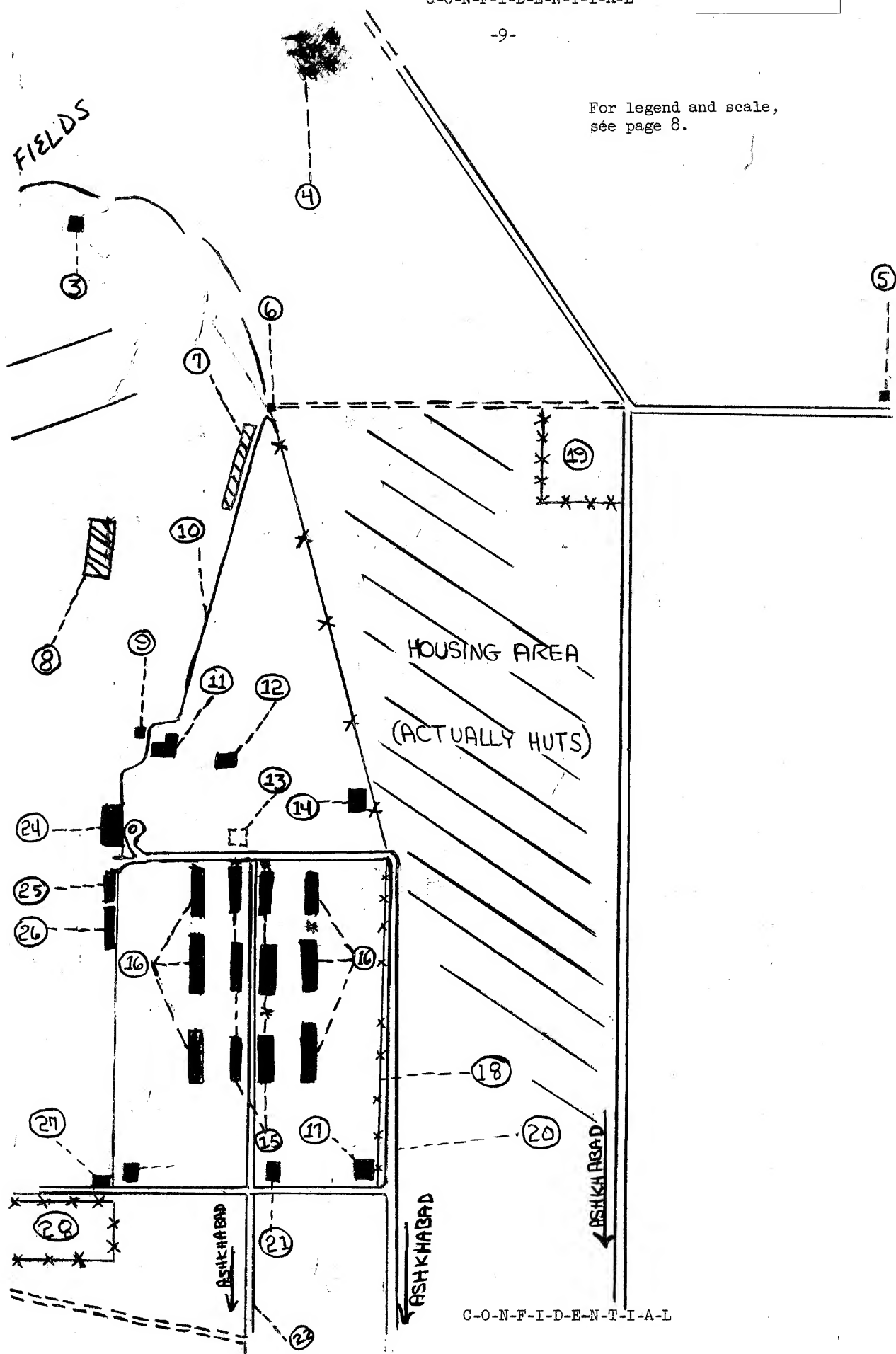
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Ashkhabad Airfield

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-D

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FIELDS



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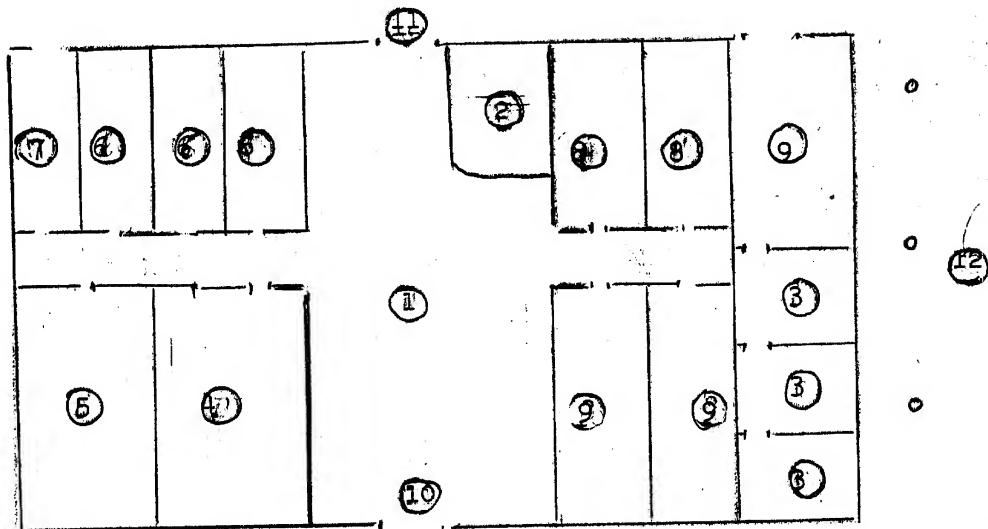
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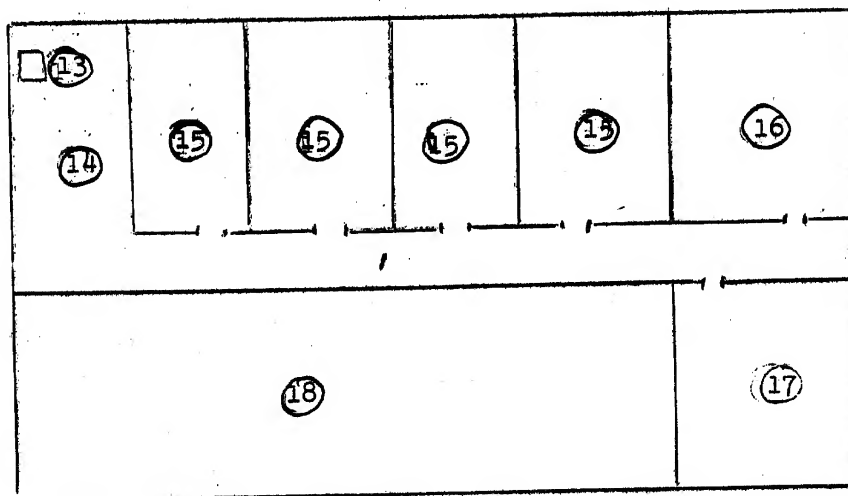
Sketch No. 2

Floor Plan of Air Terminal, Ashkhabad Airfield

Air Field

1st
Floor

Air Field

2nd
Floor

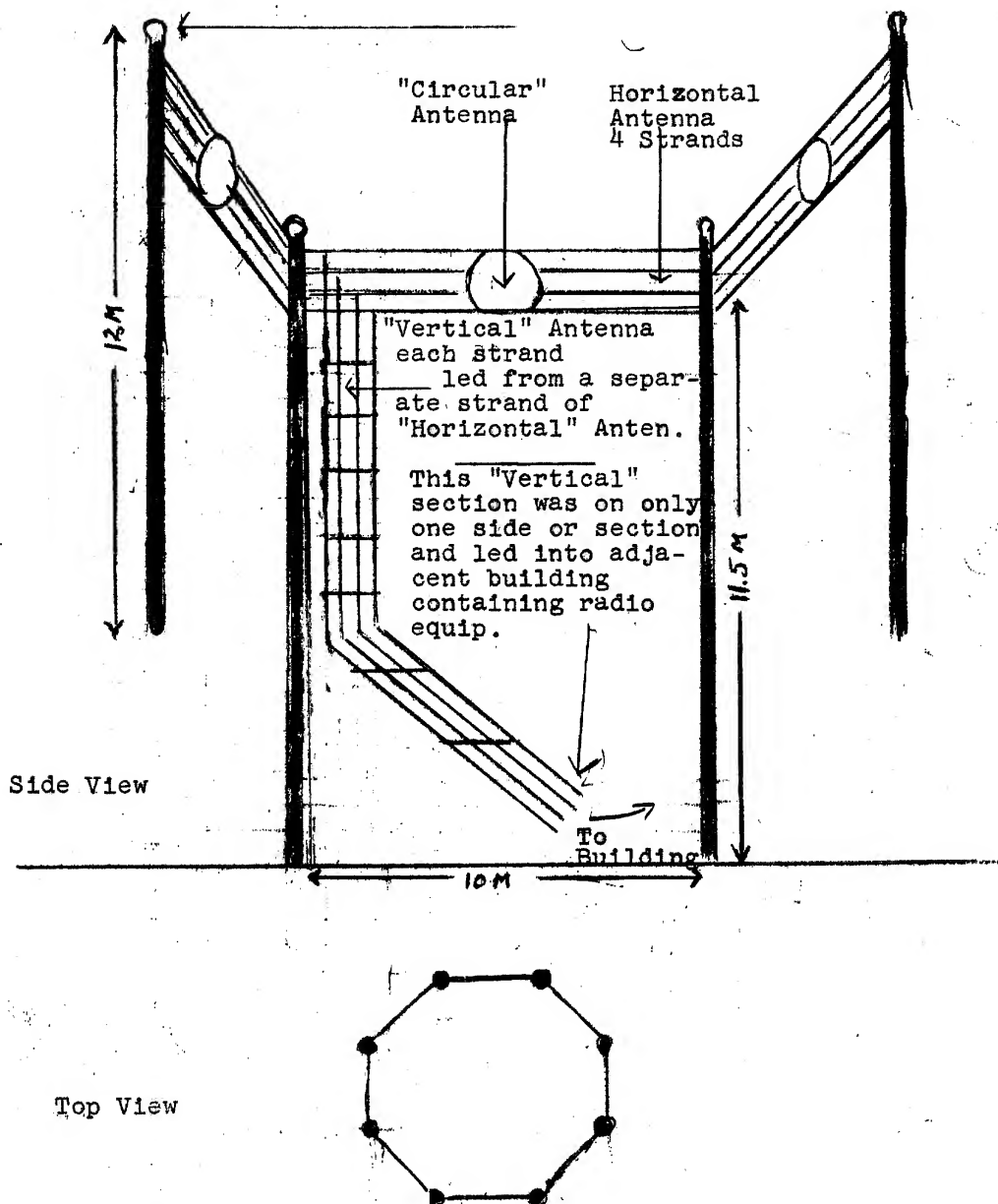
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Sketch No. 3

Airfield Antenna
located on the field

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